

# The Hijokaidan Story

by T. Mikawa (1-3) & Jojo Hiroshige (4-7)

The inside story of Japan's longest-running and most legendary (if not the most prolific) noise group, Hijokaidan, was serialized in G-Modern between 1992 and 1995. The story was begun by long-standing member, Incapacitant and Japan's leading noise collector, T. Mikawa, and continued by founding member, Alchemy boss, and expert on Japanese baseball trading cards, Jojo Hiroshige. The story is still incomplete, though Jojo promises to continue it someday.

Translated by Alan Cummings.

## PART ONE

The origins of Hijokaidan can be traced back to a free improv guitar duo formed by Yoshiyuki Hiroshige (aka Jojo) and guitarist Naoki Zushi. The duo played at a now defunct live space in Kyoto called the Drugstore (commonly known as Drug, Dorayan, Do etc.), where Jojo used to work. Jojo, who at that time was also a member of a group called Rasenkaidan (Spiral Staircase) used the Drugstore as the base for his live activities. To Rasenkaidan's sound, which can be thought of as being influenced to a large extent by its leader Ken'ichi Takayama (aka Idiot. Idiot also worked at the Drugstore, and after dissolving Rasenkaidan he formed Riradan and then Idiot O'Clock, with whom he still plays), Jojo added his own leanings towards something more "out". Jojo would later say that he had been inspired to start Hijokaidan by listening to the LAFMS super noise orchestra Airway, however I feel that the influence of Fushitsusha was the greater. Many people have remarked that this is evident in the vocal style that Jojo adopted.

At their first rehearsal Hijokaidan consisted of Jojo, Zushi and Idiot, and they recorded practice tracks such as "Messerschmidt." Their first live performance took place at the Drugstore, and they played five songs - "Masako", "Stuffing", "Wall", "Black", and "Blue". Since there were so few people in the audience, and since space restrictions at the Drugstore meant that they were only able to use a very small amp, it is hard to

avoid feeling that this performance was substandard. However, since the group themselves felt that it had sufficiently lived up to their expectations, we can only conclude that it was actually a good show.

If the author's memory is to be relied upon, there was only one other live performance by this version of Hijokaidan (though there may have been other shows at the Drugstore that have slipped my mind). The second performance was at the Eve Festival at Doshisha University in Osaka, and on this occasion the group also included Naohiko Hachita on synthesizer. They presented a sublime world of noise to the audience, but after this performance Zushi's interests moved away from free improvisation and this brought a natural and unavoidable end to this line-up of Hijokaidan.

For the group's reappearance we would have to wait until June of the next year (1980). After his project with Zushi disintegrated Jojo called together his old friends Toshiyuki Oka (aka Oka), Katsuhiro Nakajima (aka Zuke), Masako Shigesugi (aka Mako), and the author, whom he had met at the Drugstore. This new project was one that he had long had in mind - a band called Fushoku no Marie (Corroded Marie) that would be like a combination of Hawkwind (Jojo's dream band) and the previously mentioned Airway. At the time we used to rehearse a lot at Jujiya Studio in Kyoto. This studio had a glass wall that faced out onto a main road, and passersby would stare in at us in astonishment. Fushoku no Marie's first live performance was at the now-defunct Osaka live space

Crusade. This space was in a suburb of Osaka, but because the location was so bad it never managed to attract any regular customers and eventually it had to close. At this time though, things hadn't yet got that bad, and at least we managed to attract a countable number of customers.

Here's a little more information about Crusade - booking was handled by Inu's third guitarist Shinichi Kitada, and at that time he had a very relaxed policy. Because of this, Yasushi Machita and Kimiko Suyama, as well as Inu's second guitarist Keita Koma used to hang out there. I seem to recall that Kimiko Suyama was in the audience at Fushoku no Marie's debut gig.

After this show, Fushoku no Marie were asked to appear on the bill at the "Tengoku Chusha no Yoru" (Heavenly Injection Night) event to commemorate the first issue of the magazine Heaven. We were invited by Tori Kudo who sometimes came to the Drugstore. This performance was to prove to be a turning point for the band. Possibly through a misunderstanding on Kudo's part, the band was billed not as Fushoku no Marie, but as Hijokaidan. Jojo took this in his stride and calmly changed the name of the band to Hijokaidan (from his point of view it was probably like taking the band back to its roots). Also at this time, the band played a gig in Tokyo as Fushoku no Marie at the ACB Hall in Shinjuku. Afterwards the band was included on a compilation released on an independent label called Unbalance Records, which was run by an old friend of mine called Naoto Hayashi (he is now the guitarist and vocalist in Auschwitz). This

compilation, "Shumatsu Shorijo" (Final Disposal Site), was the second release on Unbalance. Also on the compilation were NG and JuraJumu; the sleeve notes were written by Chinami Shinafushi. The first release on Unbalance had been an EP limited to 50 copies by YOU (ie Yu Koyama). At this time Hijokaidan also included an old friend of Oka's, the late Ichiguchi.

After we returned to Osaka, Mako left the band, so we added the saxophonist Koichiro Kami (aka Kami), and also Hiroko Onishi (aka Semimaru) as an additional vocalist. It was decided that we would play at the Cicade gig organized by Takashi Koshi from the band Nashi. This gig took place at another defunct Osaka venue called Sozo Doba, and Kazuo Fujimoto (aka Geso) from Daigoretsu, along with Keiko Nakatsuka (aka Yasei no Kyoi [Wild Miracle], aka Yasei) appeared with us as special guest performers. We used Faust's famous track "It's a rainy day, Sunshine Girl" as a motif for the performance. A guy called Fukuzaki who worked at Sozo Doba pulled the plug on us, and this brought the performance to an abrupt end. I believe that this show was the closest we ever came to sounding like Airway. I played audio generator, lead guitar and effects. We wired the effects (an assembly of fuzz, distortion, flanger, autowah etc) between the PA mixer and the speakers, and thus were able to control the whole sound. This was the first and last time that Hijokaidan used this kind of set-up in all our years of playing.

Our next live performance took place less than a month later when we were

again added to the bill at Doshisha University's Eve Festival. The band consisted of the six permanent members who had played at Sozo Doba, minus Geso and Yasei. It was at this performance that Oka and Zuke began to show their violent side. The author and Kami knew nothing at all about their plans and we were totally taken aback, but I recall that we continued with a fiery performance nonetheless. The Eve Festival was organized by a student group called Doshisha Productions, and also on the bill were famous bands like Youth in Asia, Rose Tea Ceremony, Hoburakin, and Mada. The author also made a guest appearance with Youth in Asia (euthanasia). This festival was Hoburakin's debut performance, and their leader Aoki's meager drum kit was heavily praised by Heaven magazine. I believe that Aoki now works at Sakai Prison, and it was him who wrote all that obscure stuff at the bottom of the Zero Records advertisements.

That was the end of Hijokaidan's plans for that year, and the next time the band appeared in public was on January 4th of the following year (1981) at the now defunct Studio Ahiru in Terada-cho. The event was called Answer '81, and was organized by the late Nishimori of Up-Maker. The line-up was Jojo, Oka, Kami, the author, and new members Tomoko Kaiho (aka Woo) and Takeshi Ishida (aka Ishida-kun). Woo played bass, and Ishida-kun handled the drums. Previously Ishida had played together with Jojo in a hard-rock band called The Ishida Band. Woo was the publisher of a new-wave fanzine called "GIG", and she had played at Crusade with

a band called Juo (this performance was later issued as a split flexidisc with Rasen on the first pressing of the Red Lizard "Keshi no hana" LP by the City Rockers). She was also a member of a unit called Annon that consisted of the author and Naoto Hayashi. This time the performance was a relatively quiet one, beginning and ending with Kami's sax. There was none of the chaos of the Eve Festival, mainly because Zuke was unable to appear - it was as though he had cried out once and then fallen into endless silence. Jojo had prepared two guitars but he smashed up both of them, so when there were calls for an encore after our set he went out on stage and said, "Sorry. I've managed to break both my guitars so we can't play any more. Uh, we've also got a record out, so buy it and listen to it at home." His solid salesmanship invited gales of laughter from the audience. Jerry, Auschwitz, Up-Maker, and Zelda also appeared on the same bill.

## PART TWO

I should state straight off that "The Hijokaidan Story" that appeared in the previous issue of G-Modern was written over three years ago (as I write it is now October 1992). At the time I was told that Modern Music were going to publish a magazine and that they would like me to write an inside exposé of Hijokaidan. That was what appeared in the last issue. For various reasons it took several years for G-Modern to be published. The fact that the manuscript that this author had imagined consigned to the vaults has finally seen the light of day is something that I suppose I

should be meekly grateful for. However somehow I am also unable to avoid feelings of regret. "Why oh why didn't I write the whole story?" My acquaintances are well aware that the passing of those three years, and my alcohol consumption over that time, has caused a serious reduction in my writing ability (not to mention my powers of recall). It is sadly true that I no longer have the confidence to describe the events in as much detail as last time, and as such I beg for the readers' tolerance in advance.

To continue from where we left off. In April 1981 an event called "Answer '81 Part Two" took place at Takudaku in Kyoto. The lineup for this performance consisted of JoJo, Oka, Zuke, Kami, Semimaru, Woo, the author, plus a new member called Taniguchi (aka Taniyan - well known in certain quarters for having the biggest Zappa collection in Japan) on guitar. The performance-art aspect of Hijokaidan became more distinct at this show. In addition to the direct violence which they had expressed before, Oka and Zuke decided to convey physical loathing through every possible sensory medium. To this end, before the show they mixed garlic, raw fish and such like with buckets of putrid water. During the performance they started throwing these buckets around the stage. As it happened, I had not been forewarned about their plans and I was thus struck dumb with amazement. I remember being rooted to the spot, unable to move. Finally I drew some strength from the sight of Taniyan in his loincloth, his face shining with a certain type of innocence all the while continuing to wail on his guitar, and I

was somehow able to continue with the performance. This show also marked the first time that Semimaru urinated on stage - a routine that at one time became almost synonymous with Hijokaidan. By the end of our performance, the entire venue stank so badly that it took over a week for the stench to fully dissipate. The next day we denied all knowledge of what had taken place.

I should also mention the other bands on the bill that night. There was Hoburakin, Auschwitz and the Kansai band C. Memi and Neo Matisse who gave us that famous "No Chocolate" single. I suppose today you would say that the bill was a mixture of new wave, techno pop and rap. Also on the bill was The Stalin, who were just beginning their meteoric rise to stardom. This was the first time that the members of Hijokaidan and The Stalin had met. In later years we would come to dominate Kansai, while they ruled the Tokyo scene. Members of both bands got to know each other over talk and alcohol in the dressing room, and we soon became very close friends. There was something especially enticing about Michiro's character. At this time The Stalin consisted of Michiro Kato on vocals, Atsushi Kaneko on guitar, Shintaro on bass and Jun Inui on drums. During their set some idiot threw an empty sake bottle at the stage. It turned out to be Igami who sang with Noizunzuri (who were known popularly as Zuri). Hayashi from Auschwitz and some others got really pissed off and started shouting that Zuri were shit and that they were going to kill Igami. It was a pretty explosive situation

alright.

During this performance Hijokaidan managed to break a mike and a mikestand, and we were made to pay a fine of 30000 yen (about \$250 US). From then on that sort thing started happening on a regular basis. At this time, as is apparent from incidents like the stinking water in buckets routine, there was a real communication gap between those members of the group who favoured the performance-art aspects and those who put more importance on the sound. This gap was also apparent a week later when we played at an extraordinary rock coffeeshop-cum-live space called Mantohihi in Osaka's Tenjoji district, and Oka, Zuke and Semimaru didn't participate. The event was titled "The Certain Murder of New Wave Series, Part One," and the ostensible reason for the reduction in Hijokaidan's personnel was that the Mantohihi management didn't want any performance-art.

I should like to say a few words about Mantohihi. I first started going there because it was right next door to Hayashi from Auschwitz's place. The guy who ran it, Keizo Nakajima, drummed for Auschwitz and also played with Annon. It was a very strange place, which as far as I remember wasn't particularly popular. The club was forced to shut down when the whole area around Abaiya Station was redeveloped. Normally Mantohihi was open for business as a rock coffee-shop playing an unrestricted diet of American rock, but Nakajima somehow got caught up in the whole new wave scene and before he knew what had happened all the punk and new-

wave kids started hanging out there, along with his old customers. Mantohihi was situated in a shopping street called Abeno Ginza that ran from Tenjoji to Janjan Alley. The street had its own unique atmosphere (there was another coffeeshop that was open from six in the morning and had a shop-curtain dyed with the slogan "Asia Coffee"). Mantohihi itself had a psychedelic exterior. Even though there were never that many customers the place still had a unique sense of life. Various mysterious groups started playing live there, and even during the quiet times in the middle of the afternoon, depending on the band, the place would be packed out with an unbelievable number of fans. As far as I remember the band that drew the biggest audience was Hoburakin - there were so many people that some of them had to stand behind the bar. On the other hand, when Screen played as part of their LP release Kansai tour, even hours after the doors had opened there was a grand total of zero paying customers. The show was canceled. The area around Mantohihi had formerly been a licensed quarter and the regular customers used to enjoy going to bars that still preserved some of the old atmosphere. We're getting even further off the track now, but the late Kaoru Abe's mysterious "Winter '72" bootleg LP was a recording of a gig he played at Mantohihi.

I've gone all sentimental remembering Mantohihi, but anyway after that gig in the summer of 1981 Hijokaidan played twice in Tokyo. The first show was in June at Room 310 at the Hiyoshi dormitory of Keio University. The second was part of the

week-long “Flight 7 Days” event that took place in August at the Shinjuku Loft.

### PART THREE

If I remember correctly we appeared fourth from last on the bill at the Keio University gig. However because some of our members let off a fire extinguisher they had found somewhere during our set, the audience (not to mention the band) found it difficult to breathe and we were forced to cut short our performance. At the time this writer prided himself on his performance abilities and was thus not overly impressed with this gig, however it must be admitted that the energy expressed was something extraordinary. If you listen to the tapes of this gig you can hear someone, probably one of the venue’s staff, continually whispering “This isn’t Shibirekurage” - a most interesting effect. If I remember correctly Shibirekurage were a unit connected with Taco, though I may be mistaken. The PA man had also been affected by the fire extinguisher and he packed up and went home early, thus greatly inconveniencing the bands who were due to appear after us. They did all manage to perform just using their amps though. Also on the bill that day were Akebo Noise, Taco, Pungo, Fushitsusha, Vedda Music Workshop, and The Stalin. According to one story, Keiji Haino of Fushitsusha who were due to play after Hijokaidan got angry and said “So this is how you express yourselves!” This writer didn’t hear these words directly so I am unable to comment on the truth of this story. It also seems that some of the

members of Hijokaidan were themselves angry at the PA man’s decision to leave and that they ran around breaking the windows in the classroom. The only direct danger that your writer experienced at this gig was caused by my climbing up one of the signboards that had been erected by members of the student protest movement. I was discovered by one of the students who had erected the signboard and he mistook me for a reactionary element. Fortunately one of the promoters of the gig had some influence with the student revolutionaries and things passed over without serious incident. This experience taught me the valuable lesson that when on unknown territory it is always better to restrain yourself. The line-up at this gig was Jojo, Oka, Zuke, Kami, Woo, Ichiguchi, Taniyan, the author and an old friend of Jojo’s called Oura on synthesizer. I’ve forgotten Oura’s first name but he himself asked to be credited as Sumire-man (Violet Man) - as far as I remember no one actually called him that. Jojo originally called him Sumisan. I remember with affection that he ran off as soon as the fire extinguisher was released, thus earning everyone’s derision.

As I mentioned above, our next gig was the “Flight 7 Days” event at the Shinjuku Loft. This event was organized by Masaichi Chibiki, a photographer and owner of Telegraph Records, who was also one of the leading lights in the Tokyo New Wave scene at the time. One of the days of this event was entitled “Unbalance Day” and was given over to bands from the Kansai scene. Appearing were NG, Auschwitz, Hoburakin and Hijokaidan, and apart from Hoburakin

this was to be everyone's first real gig in Tokyo. I don't think it's an overstatement to say that this gig has now become legendary. Almost all the audience laughed with blank amazement at the sheer Kansai-ness of Hijokaidan - beyond even the imagination of Hoburakin. Then the next moment they were forced to flee in panic by the direct assault from the stage - at the same time they were unable to look away, transfixed as though by some terrifying sight. In a word I think their wide-ranging violent experience can be summed as being akin to extreme culture shock. Hijokaidan had a ten member line-up for this gig - Jojo, Oka, Zuke, Kami, Woo, Semimaru, Ishida-kun, Ichiguchi, Taniyan and the author. This was our largest ever line-up. The shaven-headed Oka and Zuke stood rigid in their combat clothing as they threw around buckets of gunge, ripped up raw fish with their teeth, using their own flesh as musical instruments - the bizarreness of the atmosphere created before our eyes was truly astounding. Thanks to the impact of this performance Hijokaidan's name became much more widely known. It is also worth noting that Semimaru's urination performance (?) at this gig drew much comment from the audience. Incidentally the author wore a specially made costume made from rubbish bags as he played the drums. Afterwards when Hijokaidan were mentioned in a series of articles (called "Hot Gigs in Kansai - A World unknown to adults") in the Kansai edition of the Nikkan Sports newspaper, I was credited with playing lead signal generator. To quote from the article, "Toshiharu Mikawa . . . . plays

lead signal generator, a very strange instrument. In the photograph booklet that accompanies the album (NB "Zoroku no kibyo") he is playing drums. Maybe in Hijokaidan they refer to drums as signal generators" - not very likely. It's even wrong to refer to it as a "lead signal generator." I played a reed (not "lead") instrument that I called a "marcolinet" which I had made by attaching a clarinet mouthpiece to an alto recorder, and a homemade signal generator. The newspaper just joined these two together. After this gig the members of the group were interviewed for the monthly erotic magazine "Target" (I had to go home early so I wasn't present). Afterwards I heard from the other members that in order to make the interview more interesting the journalist had invented quotes and that he had twisted statements to an absurd degree. Thus I came to know for myself the irresponsibility of the media.

After returning to Kyoto from our successful appearance at the Shinjuku Loft, the next appearance by Hijokaidan was again at the Eve Festival at Doshisha University, produced by Doshisha Productions. The person at Doshisha Productions who put the most work into this event was a woman called Yamazaki (again I can't remember her first name, but it wasn't Harumi. Everyone called her Masataro. When Mada had played their masterpiece "Yanyayayan" at the afternoon Tengoku Chusha event, it was her who sang). She had come up with a plan whereby all the bands appearing had to have female members. The other artists appearing on the bill were Chie Mukai,



Koyuki Ito, C. Memi solo, Kimiko Suyama, Honey and the Costume, Zag Arunda, RSR Band, and C. Memi & Neo Matisse. This time Hijokaidan played without Jojo (the first and last time), so the unusual line-up was Oka, Kami, Ichiguchi, Taniyan, Yuka, the author, Hayashi from Auschwitz who I mentioned earlier, and then the organizer Masataro, and even Chie Mukai. It goes without saying that Oka went crazy as usual, Hayashi threw a bench around, and even this writer who was supposed to be a musician smashed a stove to pieces with a hammer. The audience which hadn't been particularly numerous to start off with, all ran out as soon as we began to play and the members had to rampage unnoticed. Hayashi and myself were particularly pleased by the comment from the soundman Seiji Ishibashi (who also worked at the Drugstore) that "it was great - like watching tag-team wrestling." Ishibashi used his body to protect his equipment from the members of the group who had totally lost control - he was like a junior wrestler standing guard outside the ring. In the midst of this Hades, Masataro's shout of "Enough! Enough!" brought us back to sanity and I remember seeing Chie Mukai standing up as though in a daze. I can't remember what happened after that.

Our last gig of '81 was at the "Last Answer" event at Studio Ahiru. As you can probably guess from the title this was to be the final gig of the "Answer" series. The line-up read like a virtual encyclopedia of the Kansai scene at that time - Hijokaidan, Up-Maker, Dendo Marionette, Viola Renea, Laughin' Nose, Akai Nodo, LD-50,

Plutonium, Animal-Z, Reform, NG, and Auschwitz. For various reasons this turned out to be a comparatively restrained performance. Also at the end of '81 we were beginning to concentrate on preparations for the release of "Zoroku no kibyo."

#### PART FOUR

From around the autumn of '81, we began to think about independently releasing an album just by Hijokaidan. I think that I (Jojo) was the one who came up with the idea. Financially it would be my responsibility. It would be issued by the only independent label in Osaka, Unbalance Records, but in actual fact all costs would be borne by the members of the group - an independent release in the true sense of the words. Over half the members of the group were fans of Hideshi Hino so we decided upon one of his illustrations for the cover, and it was I who negotiated directly with him. We decided to ask Yasui Yagi to design the jacket - he was a friend of Mamoru Ichiguchi who was a member of the group at this time.

Yagi had a column called "Pictox" in the monthly music magazine "Player", and he had intended to mention Hijokaidan, Yu Enta and Hoburakin in this column and as a result the column had been discontinued. It has been rumored that the reason for the discontinuation of this column was a picture of Hijokaidan (showing Semimaru urinating) he included with his text. Another rumour holds that the real reason was the text and photos by Yu Enta that showed him drinking out of a bucket into which several people had vomited. The real

reason will probably never be known, but looking back now either seems equally likely. We decided to use this article on the back of the LP and note our opposition to "Player" magazine.

This LP is now known as "Zoroku no kibyo" but at the time it was released without a title, instead having several possible titles, such as "Zoroku no kibyo" and "2nd Damascus", here and there on the jacket. Incidentally, by using the title "2nd Damascus" we intended to make record collectors think that there had been a first album before this one. Our use of the word "Damascus" had further and deeper (?) implications - "damasu" means to trick, and "cus" equals "kasu" which means "scum". I'm not sure how many people actually understood this meaning though. The first pressing was of 444 copies, the second of 555 copies. With the first pressing we included free gifts such as a triangular lottery ticket, a sanitary napkin with a kiss mark and whatever else we could think of.

In November '81 Zuke and Semimaru who had played mostly a performing-art role decided to leave the group. Their reason was that there was no point in repeating the same performance twice. Mikawa-san recorded in the previous episode what happened at the gig at Doshisha University after they left the band - it was at this time that I had gone up to Tokyo to negotiate with Hideshi Hino.

There was also a difference of opinion between the members of what tracks we should include on the album, and in the end I think only Taniguchi and Oka participated in the editing process. At this

stage in Hijokaidan's existence the members were serious about the band itself and there were fairly heavy spiritual confrontations. These experiences made us all the more determined to release the album and continue with the group.

At the start of '82 I moved by myself to Tokyo with only the finished copies of "Zoroku" to support me. I took them to Disk Union, Gobangai (Watanabe who now manages Fujiyama worked there) and Modern Music and started selling them, and I also began to bring Unbalance Records releases into Tokyo. On April 5th we played a gig at the Shinjuku Loft to celebrate the release of the LP. The line-up was Oka, Ishida, Woo, Jojo, Kami, Ichiguchi, Mikawa, Taniguchi, and Hikari Hayakawa as a guest. The LP had been released the day before. Also on the bill were Joki (Tamio Shiraishi), and Namida no Ramen Quartet. We bought some earthworms and lugworms at a fishing tackle shop and mixed these in buckets with eggs, milk, squid, salmon roe, raw fish and so on. During the performance we upended these buckets over our heads (in order not to damage the stage we had covered it with cardboard boxes we had found in the street. I remember fondly that Taniguchi and I had wandered around Shinjuku looking for these cardboard boxes and we sometimes came to blows with the homeless over them). It was too detailed a performance to be seen by the audience but I noticed that Oka carefully allowed the earthworms to hang from his mouth. The instruments we had brought along were soon unable to produce any proper sounds.

In a gig like this where we were 200% hyped up we of course played our bodies and howled, resulting in a performance centred around badly connected noise. There was also an incident where Ebi-kun, a devoted follower of Hijokaidan and pyromaniac, got so turned on by the performance that he threw a firecracker on to the stage. The sight of him running around after the gig with a squid in one hand, a sea cucumber in the other and a big grin on his face, is one that has remained with me. I also remember that while we were washing up our filthy bodies out back of Loft, a police car appeared at the entrance for some reason. The female member of staff from Loft who had to clean up the stage complained that the worms had escaped into the cracks between the tiles. We had been sure that Loft would force us to pay some fine but they paid us all of our guarantee without a word (however it would be five years before we would again appear on stage there). A journalist from Marquee Moon came to this gig and an article appeared in number 9.

In order to support my life in Tokyo, around June '82 I compiled and released a cassette called "Hijokaidan / The Originals" of studio takes from the original '79 incarnation of the band. The A-side was a duo between myself and Nario Zushi, the B-side a jam between me and Yata from Jurajuum.

In June we played a gig not as Hijokaidan but as Shunokaidan (Summit Meeting) at Mantohihi in Osaka, with the hardcore band Memai. The line-up was Hayashi on drums, Oka and Jojo on guitar,

Kami on sax, Woo on bass, and then Junko who is still a member of the band on vocals. The idea of this gig was to cover Hawkwind's "Silver Machine", but doubts remain as to just what extent we managed to cover the song. I especially remember that Junko appeared on stage wearing a helmet, looking exactly like a student demonstrator.

In September we were due to play at Jam Studio in Shinjuku with Gism and Trash, but Trash had to cancel because of membership problems. At the time the hardcore scene was at its peak and both Gism and Trash were popular because of their violent gigs - I imagine that the promoter had worked out this line-up in order to get the most extreme gig. The cramped hall was totally packed, and this gig set a new record for attendance at Jam Studio. The line-up was Jojo, Taniguchi, Mikawa, Woo, Ichiguchi, Oka, Kami, Junko and a guest appearance by Ruka Mikami who is now a porno actress. She put raw eggs into the wastepaper basket from the ladies lavatory and poured it over her head. She then twirled around egg noodles - it was an intense performance. I also remember that Akira Sakata was in the audience as he was a friend of Kami's.

In October we appeared at the school festival of Osaka's Momoyama University, along with The Stalin and Masturbation. At this gig there weren't enough guitar amps set up on stage so even though I had brought my guitar I was unable to play. I had no choice but to stand on stage and swing a baseball bat at an oil drum. The line-up was Jojo, Mikawa, Hayashi, Woo,

Oka, Yuka and Kami. After the gig for some reason I was mistaken for Michiro from The Stalin - on a dark street a high-school kid on a bicycle pestered me for an autograph.

## PART 5

At the start of '83 I compiled our live tapes up to the previous year and in the spring released them as a ten-cassette set called "Gokuaku no kyoten" ("The Atrocity Scriptures"). I had announced that it would be a limited-edition of 100 sets, but in the event there were only a few orders and only 50 were ever sent out. I had three reasons for wanting to release these cassettes - one was that because of the members' various commitments it seemed that we wouldn't be able to play very many gigs that year; second was that I wanted to make a reply to Throbbing Gristle's recent release of a 20 cassette compilation; and thirdly because I wanted to release something that would be a summary of our live performances. We took the title from the ELP track<sup>1</sup>, which was a big favourite with us. Our live performances were a total mess so we thought we'd better admit that we were "atrocious" before someone else pointed it out. The other reason that we chose ELP was because this particular release was truly the "Works" of Hijokaidan. Along with the tapes we included 3 brush-written stickers that said "Gokuaku no kyoten", "Hijokaidan" and "Gokuaku shokuninzoku". There were also seals with photos of Jojo, Oka, Ichiguchi, Yuka and Junko, and a photocopied poster.

Since our methods of staging were pretty similar and the members got on well together, there had always been some talk of The Stalin and Hijokaidan joining forces and doing a gig as "Sta-Kaidan". The idea was that both The Stalin and Hijokaidan would play together on the same stage. It had first come up during an interview after the '81 gig in Shinjuku, but no progress had been made since then. I also seem to recall that there was a crazy plan for the three most violent stage-acts of the time - Ankoku Tairiku Jagatara, The Stalin, and Hijokaidan to play together in the same hall. In other words a lot of people tended to look upon us a variety act, and the "Sta-kaidan" idea was really an extreme impromptu response to that. In the summer of '83 Hijokaidan was asked by Beat Crazy in Kyoto to appear at a live event at the Seibu Kodo hall. They also asked me to negotiate with The Stalin who had temporarily ceased playing due to internal friction between the members. They were currently without a drummer so they were unable to play as The Stalin, but they agreed to jam with us as "Sta-kaidan". The date was 17th September '83, at the Seibu Kodo Hall of Kyoto University. The plan of action was that The Stalin would play whatever covers they liked, Hijokaidan would lay some noise over the top of that, and that we would then both outdo our previous history of fucked-up stage antics.

The opening act was Sperma, which was led by Ranko from Beat Crazy. This group

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<sup>1</sup> The "classic" Emerson Lake and Palmer track, "Karn Evil 9" was translated as "The Atrocity Scriptures" on Japanese releases of their albums.

had been formed this year and was a different unit from The Continental Kids. I recall that they put it in a very rock performance, including some Zeppelin covers.

Then it was the turn of Sta-Kaidan, eagerly await by the entire Kansai punk scene. From the Stalin side the line-up was Michiro, Shintaro, some guitarist I can't remember, and Jun on drums - he had already left the band but had agreed to return just for this performance (afterwards he was to rejoin The Stalin on a permanent basis). From Hijokaidan the line-up was Jojo, Oka, Yuka, Woo, and Hayashi. While The Stalin played songs such as The Jacks "Marianne" that had been selected by Michiro, Oka upended buckets of fermented beans, raw fish, milk, eggs and god knows what else over his head. In order to avoid defeat The Stalin also started throwing around chicken carcasses and a pig's head, and more buckets and flooring segments came flying from the audience. The Seibu Kodo and the 800 audience members dissolved into total anarchy. When a bucket thrown by someone in the audience hit me on the head, Hayashi charged out into the melee swinging a shovel. However this kind of chaos had been warmly anticipated by the audience and I believe that both they and the bands both enjoyed the show. I have very little memory of what we actually sounded like. Before the gig we had decided that this was to be a strictly one-off affair and so we purposely agreed not to record or video what happened. The event had grown out of the friendship between Hijokaidan

and The Stalin and so we wanted to avoid it being turned into a commodity at some later date. Another episode that sticks in my memory - we had bought some shovels to use on stage, and after the rehearsal Hayashi and I put our heads together and dug a pit in the garden behind the venue. Ishibashi, one of the staff from the Seibu Kodo was good enough to fall into our pit twice - a comedy classic that still raises a laugh to this day.

This show was to prove to be Oka's last with Hijokaidan. He had always put his efforts into the performance aspects of Hijokaidan, and I feel that he finally managed to expel all his demons during this performance. The reality of Hijokaidan as a violent performance group thus ended here. (Though, as you are of course aware that image has persisted to this day).

In March 1983 Ichiguchi died at his company's dormitory in Chofu, Tokyo. He had been asthmatic and that morning, because he was unable to stop coughing he had drunk a lot of cough medicine. He died from a violent reaction to the cough medicine. That morning he had phoned a doctor and begged for a house-call, but the doctor had refused telling him that he could only make house-calls in the afternoon. When the doctor arrived at Ichiguchi's room that afternoon, the room was strewn with pills and Ichiguchi was lying convulsed and dead in the midst of it all. Around the same time, Nishimori who had drummed with Inu and was currently the vocalist with Up-Maker had been working on a fishing boat when he got his foot caught in a conveyor-belt and drowned. It was a very bad time

for all of us in the scene at that time.

In June of the same year Hayashi and I started Alchemy Records (I will save the story of the founding for a later date). We planned on the one hand to issue on LP recordings from the late seventies by Ultra Bide, SS and Inu, as well as a Hijokaidan studio album. At that time the only permanent members were Mikawa and myself. Recording took place at the home-studio belonging Kaneko, the ex-guitarist from The Stalin. The group for the recording was a quartet of me, Mikawa, Junko (vocals) and Hayashi (bass). We recorded some very musical semi-improvised songs using multi-track recording and drum machines. In the end these takes were issued on the A-side, while the B-side was a completely improvised old-school-style noise piece. The LP jacket was designed as a parody of Mikawa's and my favourite German rock band Faust's "So Far". The title, "Viva Angel" was a combination reference to "Viva" by La Dusseldorf and the Neu track "Lila Angel". The track names also parodied the psych band The Seeds with titles like "Pluck the young shoots in their prime", "Bad character, but great sound" and so on. I believe that this album was the most absurd in the history of Hijokaidan. "Viva Angel" was released by Alchemy in November.

To coincide with the release of the album we played a concert with Outo at Eggplant in Osaka, which had just opened in the autumn of '84. Sakevi Yokoyama from Gism was originally scheduled for a guest appearance, but had to cancel due to

various circumstances. The line-up for this performance was Mikawa, Jojo, Junko, and Woo. We projected a video on to a screen while we played and I recall that this was a rather ethereal performance for Hijokaidan. It was our first gig in two years, and we set a new record at the time for audience turn-out at the Eggplant, a record that would stand until 1985. This gig turned out to be the last one with Hijokaidan for our female bassist Woo.

## PART SIX

In the summer of '84 we released an EP in a limited edition of 14 copies as a memorial to Ichiguchi. It was entitled "A Tribute to Ichie", his nickname. The A-side was a '79 session between myself and Zushi, the B-side was from the time when Mikawa and I played a guest gig with Jurajuum. Ichiguchi's playing was not featured on the record. We sold the EP through Modern Music and Fujiyama - neither Mikawa nor myself currently own a copy. What had happened was that I had issued it without Mikawa's permission, and in retaliation he used his copy to press a limited edition (of one) EP called "Hijokaidan / Viva Angel".

In 1985 Hijokaidan, which currently consisted of just me and Mikawa, decided to release a studio record on Alchemy. Since I was living in Tokyo and Mikawa in Osaka, we recorded half the record in a studio in Iidabashi in Tokyo, and the remaining half at the Eggplant rehearsal space in Osaka. The Eggplant take featured a duo of Mikawa on drums and me on guitar - the first time before or since that we have

played in that format. Also present at the Osaka recording were Junko and Hayashi from Alchemy / Auschwitz. These recordings were released on LP in May under the title of "The King of Noise". I recall that this title was Hayashi's idea. For the cover picture of the baby we decided to use a photograph of Morita (a friend of Hayashi and I) from Nightgallery's kid.

Alchemy also released a cassette of a take from the Iidabashi session in Tokyo that had been too long to fit on to the LP. This take was on the A-side, while the B-side was a recording by Incapacitants, which had begun as Mikawa's solo project. The cassette was entitled "Δ (delta) 8000". The title came from an incident when Mikawa and I went to a record shop in Sasaki called Eastern Works to buy a box set consisting of a miniature record-player and a miniature record that had been released by Die Dietrich Doris. We had been introduced to the shop by Ikeezumi from Modern Music and as a result we got 8000 yen knocked off the normal price. This 8000 yen discount seemed so ridiculous that it stuck in our minds and we decided to use it for the title of the cassette. I also remember being slightly embarrassed when we took some copies to Modern Music and Ikeezumi told us that the cassette was better than the "King of Noise" LP.

In April of that year PCM, who had promoted the Hanatarashi concert at La Mama (they later became famous as managers of Kinniku Shojotai, Gobans, Tama etc), asked us to participate in an independent concert they were planning to commemorate the upcoming demolition of

the Toyoko Theatre. This theatre was on the roof of the Tokyu Toyoko department store in Shibuya. On the bill were Hijokaidan, Sodom, YBO2, Taco with Machizo Machida etc. At the time it was revolutionary that underground bands like these would be able to play at a major venue like the Toyoko theatre. The line-up for Hijokaidan at this gig was Jojo, Mikawa, Junko, and then Yuka who was a former member of the band and was now living in Tokyo thanks to her marriage to Shintaro, ex Stalin member. The promoters were expecting a most grotesque show similar to what we had done in the past, and whether it was in response to this or whether it was her artistic decision (probably both, I think), Yuka urinated on the stage as part of her performance. Just under a thousand people came to the show - a massive turnout - and we were paid around \$1000.

As an example of just how well-planned this concert was, journalists from the well-known weekly photo-magazines "Focus" and "Friday" turned up, and their Golden Week issues both contained articles on the concert with headlines like "On-stage urination - Rock Chaos!" I remember that Yuka and Shintaro were both very annoyed that their faces had been printed in the magazines. On my part, I knew that there was no way that magazines such as these would review or appreciate Hijokaidan properly, but I was not at all apprehensive that our noise or performances would thus be stereotyped as erotic / grotesque. I simply could not care what they printed. However after this gig we picked up a

certain following who got perversely excited by on-stage urination, and I remember that this had its irritating aspects.

In August we went to play a session at the apartment of ex-LAFMS member John Duncan, who was at that time living in Machida. John performed using an effects-altered short-wave radio, Mikawa on signal generator and microphone, and I manipulated a cassette recorder. This take was released that autumn on the “Renkinjutsu Alchemy Noise Omnibus” by Alchemy Records, along with tracks by Hanatarashi, High Rise, Sakevi Yokoyama, and Null.

After that we opened for Psychic TV at the Nakano Kokaido Hall, and in December we played with High Rise at a PCM-promoted event at Superloft in Toritsu Kasei (famous as the venue for the Hanatarashi back-hoe performance). As Mikawa was unable to participate at the Nakano Kokaido performance, he was replaced for this performance by Kishino who is now in Zeni Geva (at the time he played with YBO2 and Null). At the Superloft performance Crazy SKB from Kyoaku Kyojindan (currently in Satsugai Enka Vinyl) came to see us with his face painted white, a mohican, and studded leather trousers with Hijokaidan badges and keyrings dangling from them. Kishino’s girlfriend at the time was so moved by our performance that she burst into tears. I remember being bemused by the ridiculousness of these two events.

From the performance at Superloft Shintaro joined the band. At the time he had left The Stalin and was planning a solo

project. In January ‘86 we played at Eggplant in Osaka with the Jojo, Mikawa, Yuka, Shintaro line-up. At this gig there was an unusual segment where I played keyboards and Shintaro played guitar.

It was decided that Alchemy would release Shintaro’s solo record and from the spring of ‘86 recording for this began. We became acquainted with Tabo (he was living communally with members of Kinniku Shojotai), who was an accomplished sampling / fold-in artist. He came up with rhythms to which Shintaro added bass and I added some noise guitar. We then sent the tapes to Osaka where Mikawa added vocals and noise, and in this way we recorded our cover-version of Hawkwind’s “Silver Machine”. In September Alchemy Records released this studio recording, recent live takes and an Incapacitants live track etc as “Tapes” - an historical overview of Hijokaidan’s career. The jacket and title were again a parody of a Faust album, “Tapes”. For the reverse of the jacket we used one of Shintaro’s pointillist pictures. The English on the jacket was riddled with mistakes (I was recently shown this LP at an American radio station and felt very embarrassed).

## PART SEVEN

In October ‘86 Alchemy Records ran into financial difficulties and I was forced to close the Tokyo office and return to my parents’ house in Kyoto. However it had already been decided that we would play a session with Nagoya punk band the Genbaku Onanies at La Mama in Shibuya under the name “Genbaku Kaidan”. I went



to the Genbaku Onanies rehearsal studio in Nagoya for a practice for the show. The show itself had been planned by the record shop Fujiyama under the title of “Gan Gan Fight”, and the idea was that various bands from the Fujiyama scene would play covers of their favourite groups. Genbaku Kaidan consisted of four members from the Genbaku Onanies, myself on guitar, Mikawa on signal generator, Junko on vocals, and a dancer in gold lamé (!) hot pants.

All the songs we played as Genbaku Kaidan were of course covers, and the songs to be played were chosen by myself and Tairo, the vocalist from Genbaku. The songs we chose were all rock classics, including Hawkwind’s “Silver Machine”, Black Sabbath’s “Paranoid” and Led Zeppelin’s “Communication Breakdown”. The mood of the times necessitated this kind of amateurism / return to ones’ roots. When we played Status Quo’s “Caroline” of course I struck some rock poses with my guitar and Mikawa danced around holding his signal generator in two hands. Even Watanabe-san from Fujiyama who was videoing the proceedings did a little boogie with his camera - fond memories. This performance was recorded to 8-track and was released by Alchemy in December of that year, under the title “Acidsoul”.

Also in ‘86 we were included on some overseas noise compilations. The first was “Dead Tech Sampler” released by the German company Dossier and organized by Kishino from YBO2. This LP, which had the uncool subtitle of “No Wave from Japan”, also featured Null, Boredoms, Ruins, YBO2,

High Rise, ANP etc. Our track was recorded in ‘84 at the Eggplant gig just after the release of “Viva Angel”. We entitled the track “Bad character, but great sound” as it was a live version of the track from that LP. Apparently when this compilation LP reached an American radio station the DJ pointed out this track and said laughingly that it was a great title.

The other compilation was “Dry Lungs2,” released by the American company Placebo Records. This record was compiled by Paul Remos from Controlled Bleeding, and the Japanese artists featured were Hijokaidan and YBO2.

At the start of ‘87 we were able to appear again at the Shinjuku Loft for the first time in five years, at a concert organized by Totsuzen Danboru. I believe that we had been banned from appearing there due to the mess we had made of the venue during our performances there in ‘81 and ‘82, but now five years had passed and they must have decided to give us another chance. From around this time we also began to play frequently at La Mama in Shibuya and Antiknock in Shinjuku. When we were playing with Sekiri at La Mama, Shintaro threw a drum case into the audience and managed to hit one of the fans in the face. After this accident it was decided that Shintaro and Yuka would leave the band (it should also be pointed out that Shintaro accepted responsibility for the accident, and everything was resolved out-of-court with the injured fan). Hijokaidan thus remained the three-piece of Jojo, T. Mikawa and Junko for a long time.

At the Fujiyama-organized Gan Gan Fight “Negro” event at La Mama, we covered Jimi Hendrix’s “Purple Haze”. This cover was also performed at Hijokaidan’s first ever open-air performance, at the “Oni no ichi” festival in Kyoto in the summer of that year. This open-air festival was very strange - it was held over several days on a piece of waste-ground that was ear-marked for development by Osaka Gas. As well as bands, there was also screenings of films and theatre performances. Looking back now, the underground theatre groups in Kyoto must have put a vast amount of effort into this festival. The bizarre twenty-metre stage they had constructed out of plywood boards was truly like something out of a dream. At this gig Kumiko from Sekiri guested on drums.

At our August gig at the Shinjuku Loft, Junko ignored a high fever to appear, and as a result we put in an unusually high tension performance. This performance was entitled “Before the heat” and was included on the “Limited Edition” LP (ARLP-016) released on Alchemy Records in November. This album consisted of live takes from our shows between August and October of that year, and it included the previously mentioned “Purple Haze” and a performance recorded at Antiknock in Shinjuku. At the Antiknock gig we also covered “Doko-e” by the German group Can. This song has since become a basic starting theme for many of our performances.

The reason why we chose the title “Limited Edition” for this album wasn’t just because it was an edition of 444 copies, but

also because Can had released an album with the same title. Later they reissued that album under the new title “Unlimited Edition”, and Hijokaidan planned to do the same thing with our album. The jacket was plain black with just a round yellow and black sticker designed by Watanabe-san from Fujiyama. Out of all the Hijokaidan album’s this one is possibly the most stylish. (Over seven years have now passed since the release of this album, and we are currently considering reissuing it on CD).

At the beginning of ‘88 we played at the Shinjuku Loft at the request of Batoh’s (currently in Ghost) band Eikyu Konran (Permanent Chaos). In the middle of our set Junko suddenly snapped her microphone cord. She then leapt into the audience and began throwing all the chairs unto the stage. Soon the stage was covered with chairs, but we were somehow able to continue our performance. However as a result of this incident we were again banned from playing at the Loft. Afterwards Batoh was also turned down for gigs at the Loft, and I remember that he sent me a bitter and scathing letter.

In January we also played as SOB-Kaidan (a combination of SOB and Hijokaidan) at La Mama in Shibuya. At this gig there was a lot of trouble, including an excited fan smashing a monitor speaker with a concrete block and a newly-bought microphone going missing, and as a result Hijokaidan were barred from playing at La Mama as well. The theme for this performance by SOB-Kaidan had been “destruction”, so to a certain extent we should have been able to foresee that the gig

would not be the most tranquil. However while the actions of the band could be said to be our responsibility, those of the audience were certainly beyond our control. Nevertheless, Watanabe-san from Fujiyama who was in charge of booking our Tokyo gigs certainly caused a lot of headaches for Nakayama-san at La Mama.

For my part I thoroughly enjoyed this session with the hardcore band SOB. Especially when we played together with SOB at Eggplant's rehearsal studio in Osaka, I participated in a mighty guitar battle with Seki from SOB. I only wish that there was a tape of that studio performance. It is beyond doubt that we constructed a speed noise sound far in advance of those grindcore bands like Naplam Death who appeared years later.